

Panama Canal Regulations

§ 111.9

particular vessels whose handling characteristics are such as to indicate that a higher speed or speeds can be prudently allowed.

(g) Paragraph (c) of this section does not apply to motorboats or to vessels of the Panama Canal Commission. Nevertheless, motorboats and vessels of the Panama Canal Commission when underway shall proceed at a speed which is reasonable under the circumstances and conditions and which does not create a hazard to life or property.

[48 FR 52704, Nov. 22, 1983, as amended at 55 FR 11909, Mar. 30, 1990]

§ 111.7 Risk of collision (Rule 7).

(a) Every vessel shall use all available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions to determine if risk of collision exists. If there is any doubt, such risk shall be deemed to exist.

(b) Proper use shall be made of radar equipment if fitted and operational.

(c) Assumptions shall not be made on the basis of scanty information, especially scanty radar information.

(d) In determining if risk of collision exists the following considerations shall be among those taken into account:

(1) Such risk shall be deemed to exist if the compass bearing of an approaching vessel does not appreciably change;

(2) Such risk may sometimes exist even when an appreciable bearing change is evident, particularly when approaching a very large vessel or a tow or when approaching a vessel at close range.

§ 111.8 Action to avoid collision (Rule 8).

(a) Any action taken to avoid collision shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, be positive, made in ample time and with due regard to the observance of good seamanship.

(b) Any alteration of course or speed to avoid collision shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, be large enough to be readily apparent to another vessel observing visually or by radar; a succession of small alterations of course or speed should be avoided.

(c) If there is sufficient sea room, alteration of course alone may be the

most effective action to avoid a close-quarters situation provided that it is made in good time, is substantial and does not result in another close-quarters situation.

(d) Action taken to avoid collision with another vessel shall be such as to result in passing at a safe distance. The effectiveness of the action shall be carefully checked until the other vessel is finally past and clear.

(e) If necessary to avoid collision or allow more time to assess the situation, a vessel shall slacken her speed or take all way off by stopping or reversing her means of propulsion.

(f) When two vessels are proceeding in such directions as to involve risk of collision, a power-driven vessel or sailing vessel or motorboat that is entering or preparing to enter the main channel of the Canal from either side shall not cross the bow of a vessel proceeding in either direction along the Canal axis and shall keep clear until the vessel proceeding along the Canal axis has passed.

§ 111.9 Narrow channels (Rule 9).

(a) A vessel proceeding along the course of a narrow channel or fairway shall keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on her starboard side as is safe and practicable.

(b) A vessel of less than 20 meters in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway.

(c) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.

(d) A vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within such channel or fairway. The latter vessel shall use the danger signal prescribed in § 111.34(d) (Rule 34(d)) if in doubt as to the intention of the crossing vessel.

(e)(1) In a narrow channel or fairway when overtaking, the vessel intending to overtake shall indicate her intention by sounding the appropriate signal prescribed in § 111.34(c) (Rule 34(c)). The overtaken vessel, if in agreement, shall sound the same signal. If in doubt she

shall sound the danger signal prescribed in § 111.34(d) (Rule 34(d)).

(2) This section does not relieve the overtaking vessel of her obligation under § 111.13 (Rule 13).

(f) A vessel nearing a bend or an area of a narrow channel or fairway where other vessels may be obscured by an intervening obstruction shall navigate with particular alertness and caution.

(g) Any vessel shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid anchoring in a narrow channel.

(h) When two power-driven vessels are meeting end on, or nearly end on, in the Canal in the vicinity of an obstruction, e.g., a dredge, drill barge, slide, etc., the vessel whose side of the Canal is clear shall have the right-of-way and the other vessel shall hold back and keep out of the way until the privileged vessel is clear.

§ 111.10 [Reserved] (Rule 10).

CONDUCT OF VESSELS IN SIGHT OF ONE ANOTHER

§ 111.11 Application (Rule 11).

Sections 111.12 through 111.18 apply to vessels in sight of one another.

§ 111.12 Sailing vessels (Rule 12).

(a) When two sailing vessels are approaching one another, so as to involve risk of collision, one of them shall keep out of the way of the other as follows:

(1) When each has the wind on a different side, the vessel which has the wind on the port side shall keep out of the way of the other;

(2) When both have the wind on the same side, the vessel which is to windward shall keep out of the way of the vessel which is to leeward;

(3) If a vessel with the wind on the port side sees a vessel to windward and cannot determine with certainty whether the other vessel has the wind on the port or on the starboard side, she shall keep out of the way of the other.

(b) For the purpose of this section the windward side shall be deemed to be the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried or, in the case of a square-rigged vessel, the side opposite to that on which the largest fore-and-aft sail is carried.

§ 111.13 Overtaking (Rule 13).

(a) Notwithstanding anything contained in §§ 111.4 through 111.18, any vessel overtaking any other shall keep out of the way of the overtaken vessel, except that within the Canal channel all pleasure vessels and craft, even though they are an overtaken vessel, shall keep out of the way of transiting vessels and Panama Canal Commission floating equipment.

(b) A vessel shall be deemed to be overtaking when coming up with another vessel from a direction more than 22.5 degrees abaft her beam, that is, in such a position with reference to the vessel she is overtaking, that at night she would be able to see only the sternlight of that vessel but neither of her sidelights.

(c) When a vessel is in any doubt as to whether she is overtaking another, she shall assume that this is the case and act accordingly.

(d) Any subsequent alteration of the bearing between the two vessels shall not make the overtaking vessel a crossing vessel within the meaning of this part or relieve her of the duty of keeping clear of the overtaken vessel until she is finally past and clear.

(e) Except as specially authorized by the Canal Operations Captain or his designee, an overtaking power-driven vessel shall not overtake and pass another power-driven vessel in Gaillard Cut, Mamei Curve or Bohio Bend between buoys 38 and 40: *Provided, however,* That this paragraph shall not apply where either the overtaking or the overtaken vessel is less than 150 feet in length or is a Panama Canal Commission power-driven vessel or a U.S. Army or U.S. Navy local tug, with or without a tow.

[48 FR 52704, Nov. 22, 1983, as amended at 55 FR 11909, Mar. 30, 1990]

§ 111.14 Head-on situation (Rule 14).

(a) When two power-driven vessels are meeting on reciprocal or nearly reciprocal courses so as to involve risk of collision each shall alter her course to starboard so that each shall pass on the port side of the other.

(b) Such a situation shall be deemed to exist when a vessel sees the other ahead or nearly ahead and by night she